

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan Public Participation Process

Interim Report

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I. Introduction

The South Carolina Wildlife Conservation Plan has eight (8) required elements. Element number 8 notes that “broad public participation is an essential element of developing and implementing these Plans/Strategies...” To address and document this Element, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) retained the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development (CIECD) to manage and conduct the Public Participation Process. The Institute is an impartial recorder of public comments. The Public Participation Process planning began in January 2004. SCDNR and the CIECD worked closely over many months to develop and refine the public participation process.

The Public Participation Process (PPP) team developed a two-stage input process: 1.) a series of 5 stakeholder focus group meetings comprised of one meeting of representatives of organizations having statewide interests, and four regional meetings; and 2.) a series of eight (8) regional public meetings across the state, four spring meetings in the state’s four major cities and four autumn meetings in the state’s second tiered cities were planned. The team used a parallel participation process to ensure that both the professional and general public concerns and comments were separately heard and acknowledged.

II. Focus Group Meetings

The PPP team used focus group meetings prior to the public meetings to gauge the breath and depth of issues, and to develop the public meeting questions. Focus Group participants were selected because of their varied and strong base of knowledge on the subject. In addition, many will play a role in the Plan’s implementation. The statewide meeting was held in Columbia, South Carolina. The regional meetings were held in Florence, Charleston, Greenville, and Columbia, South Carolina. A total of 49 stakeholder groups were represented in the Focus Groups. The Focus Group process was as follows:

- A. 8 -11 stakeholders attended the Focus Group meetings. The SCDNR decided on the attendees and sent out the invitations. The representation included conservation groups, special interest groups, federal, state and local agencies, developers, etc.
- B. The CIECD arranged the meeting logistics. All meetings were held at University facilities except the Charleston meeting (Charleston County Library).

- C. Each meeting was scheduled from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
- D. The CIECD supplied a facilitator, a scribe, and a third person to take notes directly on a computer.
- E. Two SCDNR representatives were present to answer any technical questions posed by the group.
- F. The participants were asked four questions:
 - 1. What will happen to wildlife in South Carolina over the next several decades if we keep doing what we're doing now?
 - 2. What are the specific causes of the decline and degradation of wildlife and wildlife habitat?
 - 3. What kind of interventions should we contemplate employing to improve the situation?
 - 4. How do you suggest prioritizing the input (multi-voting)?
- G. Priority issues (question 4) were distilled from the answers to the three previous questions after similar statements were combined or reworded by the focus group. Each participant was given four (4) adhesive dots (votes) to distribute among these remaining issues in order to determine if there was consensus about priorities (multi-voting). Multi-voting was conducted in the four regional meetings, not at the statewide Focus Group meeting.

Focus Group Process Analysis

Both partners agreed that the focus group process was a success. The dates, times, and locations were conducive to obtaining quality information. The participants represented a wide array of interests. The development community representation was adequate but could have been stronger. The order of the four questions started the conversation moving and resulted in a wealth of issues and ideas. The process also brought together varied decision-makers and advocates that enhanced the quality of the conversation and built a common base of understanding that will assist in the Plan's implementation.

Focus Group Priority Issues

As mentioned, the Focus Group participants were natural resource, industry and development experts and advocates. Each focus group raised a wide array of concerns that covered policy, procedures, regulation/enforcement, incentives and intergovernmental collaboration. However, three broad themes were considered high priority by all the focus groups:

- Public education
- Land use planning/sprawl
- Habitat acquisition and protection

“Cradle to grave” environmental education was advocated in the Focus Groups. Specific participant concerns/suggestions included the following:

- Educate newcomers and legislators
- Agricultural issues regarding habitat creation / degradation
- Have a public school component
- Dispel misinformation
- Economic valuation of natural resources
- Teach the intrinsic value of natural resources

The issue of land use planning elicited the most concern and the most varied responses. Sprawl and the lack of a statewide planning mechanism were high priority concerns. Specific participant concerns/suggestions included the following:

- Loss/change of habitat of plants and animals (specific loss, population growth/sprawl, non-native species, loss of farming, loss of wetlands)
- Land management (including small land holdings, BMPs)
- Land use planning
- Unplanned growth (lack of natural systems regional planning, growth of infrastructure that allows development to occur)
- Lack of statewide plan (local planning priorities, funding mechanisms)
- Local government land development regulation improvement
- Defining a vision for the future; land use regulations evaluated
- Sustainability of the resources
- Urban sprawl
- Environmentally friendly development
- Higher density development
- Landscape-level planning

Hand-in-hand with the loss of natural environments is the preservation of existing natural environments. Habitat acquisition and protections was a strong issue in all the focus groups. The concern was to purchase new lands for preservation and to protect existing lands through regulation and enforcement (including greater DNR financial and policy support). Specific participant concerns/suggestions include the following:

- Funding of Conservation Bank
- Funding various other conservation programs
- Lack of management (DNR planning, reduced field presence, difficulty increases if we don't do something different)
- Too few wildlife corridors
- Acquire land for protection/preservation (political support for conservation bank)
- Habitat issues
- Intensive forestry
- Focus on biodiversity instead of individual species
- Wetland loss

- Transfer of development rights
- Habitat acquisition
- More conservation officers

In addition, four issues or themes were given slightly less priority but were mentioned at all meetings.

- Greater research and monitoring - (population and species monitoring; exotic/invasive species management; investigate and verify the decline of species)
- Water quality - (better water quality management programs; wetland protection)
- Agency collaboration - (Inter- and intra-agency collaboration; public-private cooperation; collaborate with neighboring states; enforce existing regulations)
- Land owner incentives and taxation policies - (land owner incentives; improved tax policies; ecological restoration on private lands; cost-sharing programs)

A full review of the focus group comments can be found in Appendix A.

III. **Public Meeting Process**

The PPP team held four public meetings in the state's first tiered cities – Columbia, Florence, Charleston and Greenville. The meetings were held at two Technical Colleges (Midlands and Florence-Darlington), Furman University and one public school (C.E. Williams Middle School – Charleston). A total of 141 participants attended the Spring Public Meetings. The CIECD arranged the logistics. The Public Meeting process was as follows:

- A. Meeting times were scheduled from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., after regular work hours. In addition, no meetings were planned for the summer months.
- B. The CIECD planned for a maximum of 250 participants and eight (8) breakout groups.
- C. Public Meeting advertising was arranged by the SCDNR. A public meeting notice was placed in each area's largest local newspaper the Sunday before the meeting. In addition, four local newspapers published in-depth articles on the meetings and one television station (Charleston) conducted a segment on the Wildlife Conservation Plan meeting. See Appendix B for articles.
- D. The public meetings were a team effort – Clemson supplied eight (8) facilitators and a presenter, SCDNR supplied eight (8) scribes and two presenters.
- E. The team developed nine (9) Ground Rules that were posted in every break-out room:
 1. Turn off all cellular phones and beepers

2. Everyone participates
 3. Share all relevant information
 4. Begin and end on time
 5. One speaker at a time
 6. No dominating the discussion
 7. Respect everyone's opinion; all views have equal value
 8. Leave rank at the door
 9. No side conversations
- F. The CIECD developed job descriptions for the facilitators and the scribes (see Appendices C).
- G. The CIECD developed and supplied the sign-in sheets. SCDNR staff handled the registration where participants signed-in and gave each person a nametag that contained either a colored star or dot. The colored star/dot designated the breakout group assignment. This was useful in breaking up the groups.
- H. The meeting was structured to maximize the breakout group interaction. Staff was requested to arrive at the site at 4:30 p.m. for instructions and dinner. The three-hour meeting structure was as follows:

6:00 p.m. – 6:20 p.m.: Welcome and introduction, a brief description on the overall planning process.

6:20 p.m. – 6:25 p.m.: A description of the evening's input process and introduction of the facilitation teams.

6:25 p.m. – 6:35 p.m.: The groups were divided in two because of the limited number of participants and escorted to the breakout rooms. The minimum group size was 10 people.

6:35 p.m. – 8:20 p.m.: The facilitator reviewed the ground rules and asked three (3) questions.

8:20 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.: The breakout groups returned to the auditorium.

8:30 p.m. – 8:55 p.m.: A member of the group presented the group's 10 suggestions. No presenter was allowed more than 3 minutes.

8:55 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.: A member of SCDNR explained the next stage in the process.

Adjournment

- I. Three questions asked were:
1. What is the cause of wildlife decline in this region?
 2. What are we doing right to address these issues?
 3. What specific recommendations do you have for DNR and its partners as they address wildlife conservation issues in South Carolina?
- J. The facilitator and scribe were asked to summarize the responses to the first question by combining or re-phrasing the responses. This helped to identify issues that were multi-voted upon after completing the third question. The

participants were given 4 adhesive dots to vote on the issue(s) they considered most important. This was similar to the method used in the Focus Groups.

Public Meeting Process Analysis

The logistics for the public meetings was a success. The dates, and locations were conducive to obtaining quality information. However, the meeting times need to be reanalyzed. The public meetings began at 6:00 p.m. and no food was served. There was concern that there was not enough time for participants to eat before attending the meeting and that may have contributed to the low turnout. Because of the unknown number of participants and restrictions on funds, food was not offered at any of the meetings.

The SCDNR advertised the last three public meetings extensively. Unfortunately, the participation at all the public meetings was marginal (32, 34, 37 & 38 attendee, respectively). The PPP team attributed the low turnout mainly to the lack of a “hot-button” issue that would compel interest and attendance.

Public Meeting Priority Issues

The public meetings brought together a wider array of people and concerns. However, the dominant themes were similar to those stated in the focus groups – public education, land use planning/sprawl, habitat acquisition and protection, and agency collaboration. A dominant issue arose in each regional multi-voting process. However, all the focus group priority issues were mentioned at each regional public meeting. In Charleston habitat acquisition and protection was the predominate theme. In Greenville education programs were the main issue cited. Land use planning and sprawl issues dominated the Columbia region multi-voting exercise. And in Florence, public education and agency collaboration were strongly represented in the multi-voting process.

Some of the specific participant comments for the priority issues included the following:

1. Public education –

- More education (especially beyond elementary school, for adults too)
- More education programs/youth
- Increase public involvement through awareness of our natural resources
- Lobby for issues to be brought to the forefront and secure funding to support the lobbying effort
- Public involvement/volunteerism
- Popularize the idea of habitat protection with the public
- Get broader participation from the community
- More public education on habitat preservation
- The need for increased awareness about wildlife

2. Land use planning/sprawl –

- Promote low impact development
- General urban sprawl
- Bias by state government in favor of developers prevents needed regulation/legislation
- Loss of habitat/fragmentation
- Encourage, support, and recognize proper development and associated developers
- Habitat (non-species) based planning

3. Habitat acquisition and protection –

- Enforcement of existing laws
- Must earmark funds for DNR
- Give DNR more regulatory control
- Create a conservation/land trust fund
- Focus on habitat corridor development
- Increase support for conservation easements
- Buy more land
- Protect more land
- Hire more people
- Loss of habitat/fragmentation
- Reduce air and water pollution
- Larger fines/penalties for violators
- Convince legislature to pass regulations to protect native freshwater turtles and other creatures
- Make a long-term plan for buffering and protection of wading bird colonies and ground nesting birds.

4. Agency collaboration –

- DNR and advocacy groups (coordination of conservation efforts)
- When reviewing developments, consult local natural resource planner
- Expand/create partnerships
- Broaden constituency
- Increase interagency cooperation
- Better integration of planning and goal setting between DNR and partners.

A full review of the focus group comments can be found in Appendix C.

IV. Analysis of the Focus Group and Public Meeting results

As expected, the focus group members had a very detailed understanding of the issues that impact wildlife conservation in the state. Their priorities covered a broader range of issues than was suggested in the public meetings. For example, they focused more on the need for greater research and monitoring, landowner incentives and taxation policies, and water quality.

The public meeting priority issues were based more on general knowledge and experience. However, the public meeting attendees were also well versed on environmental issues, and state structures and policies. The regional public meetings also brought forth distinct regional concerns and biases.

Overall, both processes denoted similar priority issues – public education; land use planning/sprawl; habitat acquisition and protection; and, interagency collaboration. The specific concerns and suggestions provided in both processes (see Appendices A & B) gave a deep and thoughtful representation about what is happening regarding wildlife in the state. In addition, the issues identified as priorities will allow the SCDNR to further develop specific policy and programmatic recommendations to implement the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan.

The initial Public Participation Process plan calls for four (4) additional fall regional meetings in the second tiered cities of the state. As noted, the four (4) regional spring meetings were sparsely attended but yielded different regionally based results. However, the PPP team did not consider conducting additional meetings a productive exercise because the selected areas' have small population bases and the breath of information obtained in the first series of public meetings adequately identified the issues.

The PPP process developed a consensus on conservation priorities as it affects wildlife management in South Carolina. Instead of conducting four autumn public meetings, the team decided to conduct autumn issue-based Focus Groups. These groups will flesh out workable strategies to be included in the plan and identify potential partners and resources to implement the plan. For example, the SCDNR could conduct a series of issue-centered focus groups on environmental education, with existing and new partners that would build this area of the strategic planning process in order to successfully implement the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. The issue-based groups could focus on environmental education, habitat acquisition and protection, interagency collaboration, and land use planning/sprawl. Group members for the private sector may include farmers, land managers, and timber companies. Other user groups include educators, planners, developers, environmental groups, and local governments.

What is the SCDNR doing right?

Focus group question #4 asked, "What are we doing right?" Public meeting question #2 asked, "What are we doing right to address these issues?" Parts of the information base that the strategic planning needs to consider are programs that are working well.

There were many positive comments made by the participants. The areas with the largest number of positive comments are grouped into the following eight areas:

- Land Acquisition/Conservation Easements/Land Purchases/Conservation Bank
- Land Management and Enforcement/Heritage Trust
- Agency Outreach and Accessibility
- Education Programs
- Species Protection
- Research and Monitoring
- Partnership Development
- Land Owner Incentives and Tax Policies

Other positive comments were grouped in the following categories:

- Good Employees
- Wildlife Magazine and the Website
- Revenue Generation and Licensing
- Recreation
- Working with Hunters
- The Tax Form Check-off Box

From these and other comments, it appears that South Carolinians like what the Department of Natural Resources is doing; however, they want to see more of it. This may include a better marketing strategy for SCDNR whereby they inform the public what the Agency does for the state of South Carolina.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed by participants in the meetings that are the subject of this report do not necessarily represent those of the SC Department of Natural Resources or the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development. No judgment is made here as to the factual content or political correctness of the information received.

Appendices

- A. Focus Group Minutes
- B. Newspaper Articles
- C. Public Meeting Minutes
- D. Job Descriptions

Appendix A

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Focus Group Meeting

**February 18, 2004
Clemson University, Sandhill REC
Columbia, South Carolina
Statewide Focus Group**

Participants:

Angela Viney, SC Wildlife Federation
Pam Ferral, SC Nature Conservancy
Gary Peters, US Forest Service
Roy Belser, SC Forestry Association
Dell Isham, SC Sierra Club
Jane Lareau, SC Coastal Conservation League
Paul Sandifer, NOAA
Drew Lanham, SC Wildlife Society
Jim Griffin, SC Farm Bureau
Mike Criss, SCAPA
Brad Wyche, Upstate Forever

Facilitator:
Ben Boozer, CIECD

Question 1: What will happen to wildlife in SC over the next several decades if we keep doing what we're doing now?

- Why are you asking us about this instead of relying on the science?
- Many imperiled species will become more marginalized. Economic pressures are adversely affecting funding for wildlife protection and management. Pressure from development will increase the adverse impact on biodiversity.
- Without effort to protect and provide habitat corridors at risk species will decline and be pushed into little "islands."
- "Cockroach" species that adapt in the face of a human dominated landscape will flourish and become a management problem (e.g. white tailed deer).
- Increasing conflict between wildlife and human population. Pressure on riparian ways from development, especially along the coast with its high growth rates.
- State of Planning in SC is limited.
- Sprawl will affect species
- Degradation of habitat, gene pool destruction and increase of invasive species.
- Farmland preservation can contribute significantly to habitat preservation/creation.

- Isolated wetland pockets disappearing due to federal policy change adversely affecting existing and potential habitats. Nesting shore birds are in conflict with growth on the coast.
- Upstate is heading towards becoming Atlanta-like and we can anticipate similar impacts on wildlife.
- The land ethic will become increasingly rare. Numbness to all the development. Loss of connection to nature as urbanization increases. (does milk come from a cow or the grocery store)?
- People don't understand the natural environment landscape and are unable to discern the complexities of nature.
- Our society has become too many generations removed from the farm and has lost that personal connection to the land. There is socio-economic isolation from nature.
- Funding is static and means declining revenue in real dollars.
- Misinformation or disinformation or misused information presented to the public that is shaping their opinions.
- We need to teach land managers about ecosystems, burning (or the lack thereof).
- 14 orgs combined membership is 20K indicating a lack of the broad commitment necessary to make substantial advances politically from the grassroots level. Need to market the importance of wildlife and conservation issues more effectively and particularly to the younger generations.
- Forest industry liquidating substantial holdings points out the importance of what becomes of that property subsequently.
- Increasing growth and sprawl and poor land management methods pose serious problems.
- Loss of certain types of vegetative species and reduced burning is affecting species propagation and habitat.
- Perhaps a lack of intensive land management isn't an optimal situation for biodiversity but it's better than a parking lot. Need to use personal engagement with the natural environment rather than a virtual reality in our educational system.
- On the optimistic side, there are some good environmental education programs in the schools that are effective. However, we need experimental teaching, we're good but it needs to be integrated into the classroom.
- Conservation easements are part of South Carolina's history.
- We do have a wealth of trees and that's better than parking lots.
- Advances in remote sensing and GIS have the potential to make information readily available to the public and professional community.
- New trends in urban development that promote open space and interaction with nature can have a long-term positive effect on increasing the public's awareness about the importance and benefits of nature and access to it. The new public health focus is helping land use and perhaps conservation.

Question 2: What are the specific causes of the decline and degradation of wildlife and wildlife habitat?

- Lack of value placed on the true benefits of natural systems to us. Aquifer replenishment, cleansing the air just on the value of what can be built there. There are ways to measure in economic terms but are not presently part of the real estate calculation system.
- Fire suppression.
- Sprawl & growth.
- Road construction that makes undeveloped property attractive to development.
- Inability to manage the 5% that is protected or the 80% not yet developed.
- Knowledge gap between what we know and what we practice.
- Difficulty of conveying the value of nature to the public.
- Sprawl and lack of land use planning.
- Lack of value placed on the environment by the public.
- Greed (individual and collective).
- Failure of current economic valuation system to acknowledge the value of natural systems.
- Publicly subsidized development (roads, infrastructure).
- Money speaks louder than Bambi.
- Interruption of free- flow of streams and rivers and natural aquifer recharge systems.
- Fragmentation of private ownership reduced parcel size poses increasing broad management problems.
- Poor zoning decisions at the local level.
- Selfishness and desire to have mine.
- Quality early successional habitat.
- Bird migration.
- Conflict between being able to make a living from the land and the options to do so.
- Population growth.
- Tax issues (land poor, inheritance taxes, property tax).
- Politics and pork barrel projects.
- SC's reduced political influence in Congress due to loss of seniority.
- Public's lack of knowledge of web of life connections.
- What is going on with the regulatory agencies regarding permitting of dams.
- Loss of statesmanship.
- Lack of general public's involvement on advocacy issues related to the environment.
- Good legislation allowed to languish poor legislation prospers.
- Lack of incentives to provide habitat - practice environmentally friendly development methods.
- Not considering the long-term impact of incremental regulatory decisions.
- Democracy bodes better for the environment – hold public officials accountable.
- Short –term economic view.

- Pollutants and sedimentation.
- Property “rights’ fundamentalism is against conservation.
- Wildlife diseases (exotic pathogens).

Question 3: What kind of interventions should we contemplate employing to improve the situation?

- Statewide conservation mapping.
- Mapping land use change over time.
- Conservation Bank fully funded.
- Reform tax system (primarily Estate Tax).
- State Land Use Planning Agency with regulatory authority over approval of local land-use plans.
- Better plan to educate our citizens on the importance of the environment.
- Elect legislators who have an appreciation of and sensitivity to the importance of the natural environment.
- Connect public policy to statewide maps of endangered natural and wildlife species and natural landscapes (help to prioritize conservation funding). Also add tax incentives and dis-incentives. Identify land that would be targeted for conservation funds.
- Conservation community needs to be at the table with the development community when private property owners are making decisions about the disposition of their property. County-based conservation banks.
- Habitat or eco-systems based evaluation that is reviewed by the other natural resource agencies and ngo’s before the plan’s finalization to increase buy in and success.
- Use focus area concept and individual heroes that drive the process locally and regionally.
- Developers responsible for paying impact fees.
- Inform public about the impact of population growth and methods of controlling it.
- Life cycle impact of granting permits and applicant’s environmental record.
- Annual most threatened list.
- Increase the monitoring capacity of environmental agencies.
- Evaluate the regulatory environment and assess if current regulations impede the goals of the plan.
- State NEPA closer coordination among agencies and enforce regulations in place.
- Travis Tritt “The County Ain’t County No More” (how to connect with that audience).
- Connection needs to occur between the consumptive and conservation side.
- Shine the light on the debate and have mandated statewide forum in which it occurs.
- No new roads until the old ones are brought up to standards.

Question 4: How do you suggest prioritizing the input?

- Hand out an outline of what will be contained in the final report.
- What is the state of wildlife now in your opinion?
- Include State Land Owners Assoc., Realtors, Home Builders, Fin & Fowl, and Garden Clubs.
- Talk to people who are engaged with young people who will take these questions to their students as part of a class exercise (Angela Halfacre, and others) and student organizations.
- Use an elimination technique of some sort.

**South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Focus Group Meeting**

**February 25, 2004
Clemson University Extension Office
Florence, South Carolina**

Participants:

Jack Walker, City of Myrtle Planning Dept.
Ben Williamson, Pee Dee area farmer and former chair of HTAB
Tres Hyman, Forestry consultant
Jay James, Black Creek Land Trust
Carolyn Jebaily, Chair, Pee Dee Sierra Club
Diedre Holt, International Paper, regional forester
Bunny Beeson, Wildlife Action
John Brubaker, Native Plant Society
David Arthur, Pee Dee Land Trust
Kenny Segars, Land Manager, Heritage Trust Program Cooperator
George Sawyer, Kalmia Gardens Heritage Preserve, manager

Facilitator:
Jae Espey, CIECD

Question 1: What are specific causes of wildlife decline in the Pee Dee Region and State of South Carolina?

- Habitat loss
- Habitat degradation
- Urban sprawl
- Feral cats and dogs
- Declining water quality
- Declining air quality
- Intensive silvicultural (monocultures) and agricultural practices
- Recreational pressure
- Conflicts of land use activities
- Lack of education (especially among our youth)
- Lack of awareness and tolerance for wildlife by public (they don't understand the consequences of the tradeoffs that are being made)
- Poor land management (by DNR)—not adequately staffed or given proper equipment to take care of what they already own
- Livestock fouling streams by using them as watering holes
- Sedimentation of streams
- Light pollution along coast (see sea turtle nesting research on the disorientation of hatchlings by house lights)

- Loss of buffers
- Loss of wetlands in the region, especially near Myrtle Beach
- No uninterrupted corridors so species are isolated
- Low-impact development strategies not being followed (e.g. road ditches channel unfiltered runoff into streams)
- Pollution in general
- Exotic species pushing out native flora and fauna and degrading habitat
- Overabundance of some species (proliferation of non-exotic species)
- Industries should enhance their landholdings
- More cooperation between and among agencies
- Best Management Practices not being generally employed in timberland management and harvesting – particularly when harvesting is done by contract on land the logger doesn't own or manage.
- Litter

Question 2: What will happen if we don't do something different? (Look into the future.)

- Re-evaluate policies before implementing changes
- Outdated land development regs and no incentive to adopt low-impact construction techniques means more sprawl and excessive land disturbance
- We will create a unbalanced, non-sustainable world
- Economic interests will rule the day if left unchecked
- There will be more people and more pressure on the environment
- Chaos and randomness will result
- The aesthetic value of the landscape will be lost (psyche sacrificed)
- We will lose non-consumptive species because game species will get all the funding
- The future will be very different
- We will continue to trade the quality of the environment for the quality of life (we get to live longer but at what cost to our environment)
- We will fail to recognize our place in the web of life until it is too late (We don't know when our number is going to be up)
- Will continue to blame each other for problems with the environment although we all degrade it
- We will manage for what we like, not necessarily what we need
- Stakeholders will continue to clog the process of change

Question 3: What specific interventions would you like to see by DNR and other agencies (partners)? Examples: DHEC, SCFC, NRCS

- Encourage timber companies and landowners to leave standing cull trees for den trees (snags for wildlife)

- Work with neighboring states to improve water quality in the state
- Merge the talents of agencies and act as one
- De-politicize commission appointments
- Use money for ground work, not use tax money to fund competitive research
- Continue preserving land
- Educate public (young and old) about conservation issues
- Determine monetary value of our natural resources
- Reconsider government policies and their impact on the environment; hold public officials accountable
- Don't spend money before it is secured (a.k.a. "hopeful money")
- Change regulations so they make sense
- DNR staff needs more money so they can do the actual management
- Create user fees and tax changes (ATV taxes, environmental cleanup fees—oil from house boats, tax on non-permeable surfaces)
- Involve local governments in more partnerships—left out for fear of being anti
- Impact fees that go to DNR to fund studies and secure what remains
- Poor political system that is out-dated and doesn't listen to the masses (You are stealing from my grandchild!)
- Plan first, then implement
- Industry should hire people that will keep them in check environmentally—industry should be held accountable for doing what is in the best interest of the environment and there should be monitoring of these activities as well as enforcement of regulations.
- Have some restricted areas (Things get loved to death...through public access)
- Change some bad laws (make no wake zones, new or revised regulations, etc.)
- DNR should set regulations/laws and not the legislature and let them manage it
- Public participation in setting policies
- Outreach to communities (so folks don't always have to rely on assistance coming from Columbia)
- Impact studies are needed that quantifies the true cost of development as is currently practiced and of the benefits gained through low-impact development techniques.

Question 4: What are we doing right?

- Having meetings like this to discuss the issues, form alliances, and educate each other (We all agree the wall needs painting, but we're arguing about the color!)
- Cost-share programs out there are great: CRP and WRP / need more incentives for landowners and to get the word out on existing ones
- Tax credits for land preservation
- Heritage Trust great model for this country to follow
- Master Garners Assoc. good to have
- Educational programs are doing some good (W.I.L.D. Programs and SC Wildlife Magazine)

- More influx of other university graduates into DNR nowadays
- SC is lucky in that it still has a lot of habitat to work with / save
- The growing trend of producing organic foods provides evidence that there is a market for alternatives to existing agricultural practices
- There should be a wetlands preserve program

Major Issues:

The following 26 issues represent those distilled from the answers to the 4 previous questions after similar statements were combined or reworded by the focus group. Each participant was given four votes to distribute among the remaining issues in order to determine if there was consensus about priorities. The number of votes received by an issue is indicated to its right.

1. Decline of species	2
2. Air quality	
3. Agency collaboration	3
4. Defining a vision for the future	6
5. Re-licensing issues (of Power Plants, etc.)	1
6. Land use regulations	3
7. Economic valuation of natural resources	4
8. Government agency stewardship	
9. Better budgeting practices	1
10. Expand user fees	2
11. Involve local governments in partnerships	1
12. Habitat issues	6
13. Urban sprawl	3
14. Water quality	5
15. Education	6
16. Focus on biodiversity instead of individual species	
17. Intensive forestry	
18. Increased unmanaged access to natural areas is a problem	
19. Management of DNR/state-owned lands	
20. Livestock access to streams	
21. Conflicting uses for the same tract	
22. Wetland loss	
23. Feral animals / exotic pests	
24. Verification of decline needed (population monitoring)	
25. Silvicultural practices	
26. Sustainability of the resources	1

**South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Focus Group Meeting**

**March 9, 2004
Charleston Public Library
Charleston, South Carolina**

Participants:

Roger Banks, Winyah Bay Focus Area
Norm Brunswig, National Audubon Society
David Maybank, ACE Basin Focus Area
Karen Johnson, Lowcountry Open Land Trust
Cindy Baysden, Beaufort Open Land Trust
John Holloway, Beaufort County Planning Dept.
Clay Cable, SC Shrimpers Assn.
Elaine Morgan, Berkeley County Chamber of Commerce
Walt Martin, Associated Developers Inc.
Joe Pinson, Sierra Club, Winyah Group

Facilitator:

Chip Boling – Clemson Cooperative Extension Service

Question 1: What are specific causes of wildlife decline in the Low Country Region and State of South Carolina?

- Shrimp baiting is the cause of shrimp declines; disrupts normal migration patterns and shifts distribution of other co-dependent species; reduces food supply to offshore native species. This type of interference would not be tolerated with ducks.
- Influx of people into formerly forested or farmlands and resulting increase in non-point source pollutants (storm water runoff needs to be properly treated before entering water bodies). Drainages straight from surfaces need to be properly treated; this is not expensive to do.
- Habitat loss due to excessive paving
- Loss of forestland; conversion of forest land to agriculture and urban areas; loss of wetland habitats
- Development that doesn't take the impact on wildlife into consideration (Prime example: Hilton Head deer overpopulation)
- Lack of knowledge of [natural history and habitat requirements] of specific species
- Improper growth management
- Highway development
- Changes in land management, or absence of management altogether, changes in [abundance of] food plants for certain species

- “I am the cause, [speaking as a developer].” People are against two things “density and sprawl.” Higher density development would make housing more affordable; not possible due to existing ordinances that don’t allow for growth that is in concert with environment
- lack of wildlife corridors
- habitat fragmentation; example: painted bunting
- Lack of funding/political will [to change current land use and development practices]
- Lack of flexibility among permitting agencies (bureaucrats don’t employ common sense and creativity in administering regulations - i.e. no flexibility in permitting re-impoundment of rice fields even with net gain in habitat values.) Re-impoundment of rice fields in connection with a major conservation easement that results in a net gain of habitat values.
- Lack of DNR conservation officers
- Outdated agency policies
- There is no regional approach to planning at the appropriate scale (watershed)
- Public Policies (i. e. tax policies) actually encourage improper land management

Question 2: What will happen if we don’t do something different? (Look into the future.)

- Growth is going to occur whether we want it or not; [current patterns will continue] if we don’t start planning. The terms “control” and “management” don’t quite capture what is needed, but we need the tools to do a better job.
- The character of the entire coast, e.g. marshes, woods, open lands will change
- There will be irreversible losses of certain species and habitats
- There will be continued fragmentation and erosions of habitats, loss of associated species. This is a long-term (decades) process; we do not notice incremental changes. For instance, if the Ports Authority had to present the entire billed-out plan for Daniel Island, it would have been shot down. If we were to present what has actually happened over time in a place like Mt. Pleasant to the Planning Commission/Council as a development proposal it would have shocked the community. But the growth occurred so incrementally that folks didn’t really show much concern.
- Nuisance species will grow in number; prime example: deer in some coastal developments. The impact is now, not in the future, yet no action seems to be taken. Deer population is increasing and is out of control, numbers are not sustainable; health of the deer herd is poor.
- Ranges of some species in SC and neighboring states will continue to shrink
- Extinction of some species
- Deer depredation problem is the result of landowners taking out their hardwoods. However, property taxes based on full market value force owners to do something [to bring an economic return]. Example: the north end of the Isle of Palms was assessed at high market value, leading to its sale for development.

People run prices of the land up; we need places reserved from maximum economic use where wildlife species can continue to exist.

- If we don't change what we're doing now the cost of everything, i.e., remedial actions will go up
- If regulatory actions cause the cost of development to go up it will adversely affect citizens in the lower income range (housing affordability). For example, Charleston is the least affordable place to live in the southeast.
- We have lost our societal conservation ethic
- Loss of quality of life
- Owners of large tracts of land, e.g. plantations, will be forced to sell it if land prices continue to increase, or they will sell if changing land use practices [on surrounding lands] affect the qualities of the land that the owners appreciate.
- Lack of financial incentives for people to hold onto land
- Loss of open space
- Loss of species that we weren't aware of and the potential knowledge we might have gained by studying them

Question 3: What specific interventions would you like to see by DNR and other agencies (partners)? Examples: DHEC, SCFC, NRCS

- Research, baseline data to tell us what we need to know about management and conservation of affected species.
- Carryout planning at a landscape, trans-jurisdictional, level; not to be confused with regulation.
- DNR should support bird sanctuary status for Murrells Inlet
- Control of effluent and storm-water discharges need to be upgraded; sources of non-point source pollution need to be reduced. "Get some brains" working on processes to break down oils.
- Need to have more interagency cooperation at the staff level at the state and local level; force agencies to deal with each other. Example: City of Mount Pleasant and Charleston County are at odds over how to handle development in the Highway 17 corridor. The result is that "You don't own land, you wait until someone tells you what you can do with it." Regional planning is not the solution.
- There needs to be a balance struck between regulation and development, but it needs to be done in a cooperative climate rather than through conflict. Needs to have broad participation from those who are affected; need to respect property rights and decide how much additional growth is desirable.
- The policy of SC is to develop jobs, yet "Homes are where jobs go to spend the night."
- Cooperation between public and private sectors needs to occur; example: North American Waterfowl Management Plan Focus Areas.
- Appropriate regulations need to be developed that address isolated wetlands. Comment: There is a problem distinguishing "real" wetlands from uplands.
- More money available for land acquisition

- Utilize private sector resources to improve planning process; example: TNC's Landscape Mapping Project
- Improved wildlife depredation control needed in some areas
- Universities and Colleges need to collaborate better on research and the results need to be reported in an understandable way for public decision makers
- Carryout a major "habitat GAP analysis" of protected areas; determine what is needed to round out the public land base and fill the gaps in protection.
- All of these are good ideas and they require funding. The public needs to be made aware of these issues and their short and long term impacts in economic terms, not just intrinsic ones, so they are willing to invest the dollars necessary implement plan. Information needs to be presented in an interesting form.
- We also need unbiased scientific research [on factors affecting wildlife populations].
- Agencies need to deal with prejudices and biases
- Agencies need more funding in order to do an adequate job; need more people to do the job.
- Hire more conservation officers.
- Improve Public Policy to improve private conservation efforts (taxes)
- We need to improve the communications among the stakeholders (developers, regulators, conservation interests) and someone (or entity) needs to fill that role and it needs to be in a non-confrontational forum.
- The dialogue we are having today is a good start.
- Incentive options need to be developed and more "out-of-the-box" thinking on the part of bureaucrats and developers.
- We need to have more examples of environment-friendly development
- Land development and related state regulations need to be developed that encourages environment-friendly development.
- Institute Transfer of Development Rights policy or a similar measure that can be employed when a landowner's property values are diminished by development regulations.
- Develop/promote mass transit to reduce demand for more roads.

Question 4: What are we doing right?

- DRN needs to continue its educational efforts, which are already high in quality
- Have been reaching out to stakeholders (general public and environmental/conservation groups) more than in the past
- Good land acquisition program
- Using "landscape" approach; more thinking on a landscape scale
- More research happening
- Some good landowner incentives have been developed
- Has been more dialog and outreach with development community
- Focus Area programs
- Current monitoring programs are effective

- To some extent doing a good job with regulation of hunting and fishing (catch/bag limit) of game
- Doing well considering the pressure from reduced funding
- Doing a good job of funneling state and federal resources to local level (land owners)
- Pending fresh-water trot-line fishing regulations & taking of breeder catfish
- When there has been involvement of DNR in residential development issues the process went well
- The existing system of heritage preserves
- Statewide habitat conservation plan
- The mitigation process for habitat impacts in connection with permitted activities has improved.

Major Issues:

The following 20 issues represent those distilled from the answers to the 4 previous questions after similar statements were combined or reworded by the focus group. Each participant was given four votes to distribute among the remaining issues in order to determine if there was consensus about priorities. The number of votes received by an issue is indicated to its right.

1. Research and Monitoring	4
2. Public Education	2
3. Landowner incentive	4
4. Environmentally friendly development	1
5. Improved tax policies	3
6. Transfer of development right	
7. Habitat acquisition	7
8. Public-Private cooperation	2
9. Better water quality management programs	3
10. Inter-agency collaboration	1
11. More conservation officers developments	
12. Higher density development	1
13. Nuisance wildlife depredation	1
14. Local government land development regulation improvement	1
15. More funding for agencies	1
16. Mass transit	
17. Landscape-level planning	7
18. TDR	
19. Exotic/Invasive species management	
20. Developer/agency/conservation collaboration	2

**South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Focus Group Meeting**

**March 16, 2004
Clemson University Sandhill REC
Columbia, SC**

Participants:

Lindsay Pettus, Catawba Valley Land Trust
Charlie Compton, Lexington Co. Planning Director
Corky Lee, Forest Industry Rep., past member SCDNR board
Billy Cate, Landowner, Easement Donor, Congaree Land Trust
Bob Bailey, SC Sporting Protection League
Jean Everett, SC Native Plant Society
Deas Manning, Manning & Kirk Residential Development
Dr. John Fairey, Clemson Dept of Biological Sciences (Ret.)
Clinton Lemon, Safari Club International

Facilitator:

Bill Blackston, Clemson Cooperative Extension Service

Question 1: What are specific causes of wildlife decline in the Midlands Region and State of South Carolina?

- Habitat loss
- Fragmentation of land into smaller tracts (forestry interests selling off large tracts)
- Growth
- Sprawl, unplanned development
- Lack of management for appropriate species on property that we own
- Poor regional growth management
- Public education deficit
- Overlooking the relationship and interdependency of ecosystems and resulting loss of them
- Lack of common effort and communication among like-minded private side organizations with interests in common
- Divide and conquer is what is happening now
- Over-utilization of limited public space (hunting and fishing)
- Inability to use fire as a land management tool (smoke management guidelines)
- Over-clearing of land when development occurs
- Lack of statewide wildlife plan that is based on consensus
- No inventory of resources/knowledge
- Lack of quality habitats that are “saved” as much as the lack of preservation of open space
- Not clear to public that we’re not advocating that everything be saved rather that strategic decisions need to be made about what is appropriate to be preserved
- Funding is too grant-based and lacks continuity

- Introduction of non-native species
- Proliferation of nuisance species
- We've lost our "indicators" of quality habitats that we used to use in an informal way (overpopulation of predators and lack of predator control programs)
- Infrastructure expansion encourages growth and we aren't carefully considering this from a public benefit/detriment perspective
- Game population dynamics are out of balance (especially on coastal islands)
- Political and planning boundaries don't match wildlife management needs (interrupted migratory routes)
- Need to retain/regain man-made habitats such as old farms and rural lands (urban as well)
- Sometimes wildlife managers manage for single species (turkeys)
- Local land development regulations that don't treat everyone the same (large commercial forestry concerns being exempt from certain provisions that private land owners must comply with – Richland County T&C) or don't address habitat preservation issues in ways other than prescriptive regulation that is sometimes excessive and places an unfair burden on developers without some reward or financial incentive
- Lack of species and habitat inventories at the local and regional scale to provide us with the information necessary to make quality decisions
- Diseases born by introduced or reintroduced species
- Lack of enforcement of zoning regulations
- Need to utilize existing inventories and information better

Question 2: What will happen if we don't do something different? (Look into the future.)

- Will continue to lose species
- Polarization of interests will escalate (political gridlock)
- Undesirable species will continue to proliferate
- Quality of life will suffer (water quality, air quality, soil quality) community pride will decline
- Isolation of wildlife, pockets of preserved areas
- Uncontrolled growth will continue
- Misinformation and lack of understanding of issue will increase and there will be lack of public support to change patterns
- Our economy will suffer (tourism, loss of revenue from outdoor enthusiasts and supporting businesses, etc.)
- Fewer species will be in decline because there will be increased extinction rates of endangered ones
- Will become even more difficult to manage public lands

Question 3: What specific interventions would you like to see by DNR and other agencies (partners)? Examples: DHEC, SCFC, NRCS

- They need to control nuisance species better and have a specific goal in place
- Need to coordinate better among themselves and not work at cross-purposes
- Better enforcement by DNR for target species
- Have to set priorities of species that will be managed and will benefit other species at the same time
- Stronger laws/regulation of degradation of water resources, air quality, and litter
- Natural resource science needs to be taught in public school science curricula
- The importance historically and presently of our agricultural economy needs to be made known
- DNR and others need to implement good management plans after they are developed
- Research needs need to be met in a variety of ways (doctoral, masters that use our state's research needs as their topic and look at ways to encourage this or provide incentives to do it)
- Newcomers don't understand our land ethic
- Need to develop a plan to finance the plan after it is developed
- Somehow the population increase will need to be addressed or the pressure to develop in undeveloped areas will increase
- Identify SC's environmental priorities
- If our state government doesn't address the need to acquire critical lands a major tool to address the issue will be lost (Buy Land!)
- Natural resources need to be on the radar at the local and state level when decisions affecting them are being made
- Energize a land donation effort
- DNR's field presence needs to be supported and assistance at the local level bolstered
- Media market needs to receive/use better information than they do currently
- Regional management plans will be more effective
- Conservation Bank needs to be funded and must become involved in the political process to get this done
- Encourage partnerships among organizations and agencies with allied interests
- Plan must be sustainable and provide a mechanism to continue funding
- Work with folks on land restoration activities
- Find some way to educate the Legislature about environmental issues
- Creative approaches to land acquisition needs to be employed

Question 4: What are we doing right?

- Getting diverse groups involved; talking and planning about the future
- Game management efforts brought back some species
- Land protection even with limited resources

- Partnerships created and expanded to facilitate changes
- Great on-the-ground management staff
- Doing a statewide plan
- DNR needs to be complimented on the education and research efforts
- DNR is very accessible

Major Issues:

The following 14 issues represent those distilled from the answers to the 4 previous questions after similar statements were combined or reworded by the focus group. Each participant was given four votes to distribute among the remaining issues in order to determine if there was consensus about priorities. The number of votes received by an issue is indicated to its right.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Habitat (loss of large ecosystems, ecological restoration on private lands, quality of habitat as well as quantity, clear-cutting, too few wildlife corridors, suppression of natural management events, man-made environment, fragmentation of land) | 6 |
| 2. Unplanned Growth (islands of wildlife, enforcement of regulations, lack of regional planning [based on natural systems], growth of infrastructure that allows development to occur) | 2 |
| 3. Lack of Management (DNR planning, reduced DNR field presence, difficulty increases if we don't do something different) | 4 |
| 4. Public Education (newcomers, legislative, misinformation, convey the importance of agriculture, public school component) | 5 |
| 5. Diversity Planning | |
| 6. Communications (coordination, prioritization of interests/\$, cooperation) | 3 |
| 7. Lack of Statewide Plan (local planning priorities, funding mechanisms) | 4 |
| 8. Inventory Information (identity indicator species) | |
| 9. Sustainability of Programs (after the startup \$/grant is gone) | 2 |
| 10. Interaction between species (deer eating bird habitat, over-population, expansion of numbers and range of nuisance/undesirable species) | 3 |
| 11. Lower Quality of Life (water quality enforcement, fewer outdoor enthusiasts, air and water quality, litter) | |
| 12. Loss of Jobs (tourism) | |
| 13. SC Specific Research | |
| 14. Acquire Land for Protection/Preservation (political support for conservation bank) | 5 |

**South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Focus Group Meeting**

**March 25, 2004
Greenville County Extension Office
Greenville, South Carolina**

Participants:

Dana Leavitt, Upstate Forever Land Trust
Dr. Walt McPhail, Greenville Forestry & Wildlife Society, American Tree Farm System
Brad Thompson, Thompson Forestry Consultants
Rick Huffman, SC Native Plant Society
Dr. Jim Carter, Trout Unlimited, Upstate Chapter
Norm Sharp, Conservation Chair, SC Sierra Club
Luke Lewis, National Wild Turkey Federation
Jim London, Clemson University, Economics Department & Pickens County Council
Danny Howard, Senior Agent, Clemson Extension, Greenville County

Facilitator:

Jae Espey, CIECD

Question 1: What are specific causes of wildlife decline in the Upstate and State of South Carolina?

- Population growth and urban sprawl resulting lack of corridors
- Too many people, Cell towers highways, fragmentation
- Isolation of populations
- Change in habitat
- Lack of natural predators
- People don't realize that they are destroying habitat (e.g. conversion of natural landscape to lawns)
- Non-native species invasion (both flora and fauna)
- Change without direction and understanding of what is being done
- Poaching
- Lack of charisma of some of the endangered species that don't resonate with the public in terms of caring about their loss
- Land conversion resulting in change of habitat
- Water quality degradation
- In some cases there are too many predators (e.g. hawks, bobcats, feral animals)
- Loss of farming activity

Question 2: What will happen if we don't do something different? (Look into the future.)

- Effects will be irreversible if some change in our attitudes doesn't soon occur

- On the one hand we have to change and on the other you can't stop change. If more use of BMP in the forestry industry doesn't occur an opportunity will be lost
- We will lose sportsmen who come here to enjoy hunting and fishing
- There will be a domino loss of species
- If we continue at our existing level of educating the public and decision-makers they will continue the trend of disassociating themselves from the natural environment
- Loss of quality of life
- Will adversely impact economic development especially as industry and business place more and more value on amenities that include the condition and quality of the natural environment
- Every generation places different emphasis on what they mean by quality of life and if we continue to loose contact with our natural environment at the current rate, it will become less and less of a consideration in what people feel is important
- Will we loose the socio-psychological value that the natural environment contributes to our society, and the loss occurs so incrementally that we aren't conscious of its loss
- We will place less value on our publicly owned lands if we don't consider them important

Question 3: What specific interventions would you like to see by DNR and other agencies (partners)? Examples: DHEC, SCFC, NRCS

- Education of the development community needs to occur
- We need to have better land use planning that employs strategies and methods that provide for habitat protection and creation (can be through incentives)
- We need a Green Print program; identify geographic areas of concern, map them and find ways to manage them better
- We need to develop programs that encourage biodiversity
- Need Transfer of Development Rights and other means to provide a financial benefit to land owners to participate in conservation efforts (need to provide technical assistance in educating people about and implementing TDR programs)
- The public must be educated so that they will care about what is happening, need to start early (in the schools)
- Need to develop species specific solutions
- Stop the raid on funding for the Conservation Bank
- Need to refine our collection and use of information and data in systematic manner
- There needs to be money available to local governments to implement conservation programs

- Development community needs to be more proactive when undertaking development activities (fleeing wildlife). They need to inform adjacent property owners that there will be a temporary problem with displaced animals
- Rural/urban interface
- Get involved in working with communities in the Comp Plan development Process and provide assistance in the natural resources element and how to translate options that support wildlife in the land development regulations
- Must prioritize the audience you intend to educate (is the council a higher priority than some other group?) Must have a multi-pronged approach.
- Relate the natural environment to economic development and translate intrinsic value to financial value
- Incentives, incentives, incentives (don't limit to large land holders)
- Find ways so people don't have to sell out to some sort of higher value use by providing alternatives for them to extract financial benefit to help them retain their property (establish standards that someone must adhere to in order to receive this kind of benefit)
- Must increase "Land Ethics" so people place as much value on natural land in that state as they do on its "highest and best use" fair market worth
- Deal with species that are overpopulated (e.g. beavers)
- Identify the motivations for getting land owners to change their behavior
- Provide developers with information that shows the worth the purchasers place on things like walking trails as opposed to a golf course (Jim Anthony's development used as an example)
- Utilize Clemson Extension personnel to address new approaches to land use (a regional resource person?)
- Better marketing of some of the success stories to demonstrate the benefits of conservation programs and specific projects
- Take advantage of the inverse relationship between increased education and resulting land ethic and the diminishing amount of financial incentive needed to reward the land owner
- Need to communicate the importance of plant communities and how it contributes to the long-term benefit of the natural environment.

Question 4: What are we doing right?

- Heritage Trust
- Jocassee Gorge acquisition
- Storm water management mandates
- The State Wide Smart Growth Task Force that had broad participation from a variety of stakeholders
- The Air Quality Task Force that was formed in response to pending air quality rules from EPA kicking in around the Charlotte metro region that includes parts of SC
- Just seeking public input on an increased basis

- Reaching out to NGO community
- Web site and good information on it
- Local initiatives like the Forestry and Wildlife Society in Greenville County
- Need to take advantage of the large timber companies selling off large tracts
- The workshops that are being put on (Clemson and others) Gregg Yarrow's book was cited as a good resource to understand how to determine the carrying-capacity of your land for wildlife.
- DNR employees are great with their technical assistance
- Clemson Extension staff have been helpful especially when referring a customer to a specific local supplier or small business
- NCIST, Trout Program
- The development of BMP for water quality
- The availability of speakers for local programs

Major Issues:

The following 13 issues represent those distilled from the answers to the 4 previous questions after similar statements were combined or reworded by the focus group. Each participant was given four votes to distribute among the remaining issues in order to determine if there was consensus about priorities. The number of votes received by an issue is indicated to its right.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Loss/change of habitat of plants and animals
(species loss, population growth/sprawl, non-naive species,
loss of farming, loss of wetlands) | 9 |
| 2. Education | 7 |
| 3. Land Use Planning | 5 |
| 4. Economics of Sustainability (landowner incentives, the intrinsic
value of natural resources, marketing, cost-sharing programs) | 4 |
| 5. Water Quality | 3 |
| 6. Funding of Conservation Programs | 1 |
| 7. Land Management (including small land holdings, BMPs) | |
| 8. Imbalance of Predators | |
| 9. Economic Development | |
| 10. Health | |
| 11. Priorities (strategic, health of ecosystem) | |
| 12. Conservation Bank | |
| 13. Enforcement/existing regulations | |

Appendix C

Public Meeting Florence – Darlington Technical College Florence, South Carolina April 27, 2004

Thirty-two people participated in the Florence, South Carolina public meeting. The participants were broken into two groups. The information below is their responses to the three questions.

Question #1: What is the cause of wildlife decline in the region?

Dots

- Loss of habitat
- Pollution
- Human population increase resulting in loss of habitat
- Wildlife disease
- Development – loss of habitat
- H – Habitat
- I - Invasive species
- P - Pollution
- P – Population (human)
- Irresponsible hunting practices
- Change in cultural/management practices
- People don't care
- Loss of natural predators
- Laws - make it difficult to continue routine practices
- Species population increases can lead to decreases – population mismanagement
- Lack of public education about wildlife
- Changes in land use practices that result in habitat loss for some species
- Nutrition, changes in land use results in decline of available food sources leads to disease
- Awareness of problems and what to do about it

Stars

- Decline of habitat – especially wooded area. Partly as result of sprawl, with associated fragmentation
- Decline in water quality especially in coastal areas – ex. Bacteria affecting mussels

- Pressure on hunted, on other hand, hunters burn, plant food plots, contribute money
- Lack of education among hunters
- Air and water pollution, pesticides
- Certain species of wildlife increase, possibly to detriment of others. Deer are overabundant
- No- till agriculture leads to ecological imbalance, such as fire ants
- Young people in general lack education on significance of wildlife
- Erratic management efforts, not coordinated, and dependent on funding. As in watershed management
- Orientation toward single-species management, rather than broader goals
- Some species such as quail have not rebounded because management not targeting specific problems such as quail have not rebounded because management not targeting specific problems such as predators
- Lifestyles have removed people from close contact with land, therefore people don't understand impacts of their choices
- Lack of education, of children, adults, and elected officials as to harmfulness of sprawl
- Lack of attention from elected officials
- Failure to produce clear mandate from electorate
- Inability to change out-of-state or out-of-country conditions that impact local wildlife
- Replacement of hardwoods with pine,
- Lack of management of species such as leaves that can be destructive to wooded habitat
- Loss of species diversity
- Overuse of resources, esp. water
- Insufficient recycling, resulting in harmful disposal of refuse
- Loss of habitat, resulting in more pressure on remaining natural habitat
- As well as residential area
- Development features such as tall towers that are directly harmful to wildlife (birds)
- Pollutants released from nuke plants
- Sonar exclusionary zones (lack of) is harming whales

Question 2: What are we doing right to address these issues?

Stars

- Holding public meetings, focus groups
- Wetlands protection, such as encouraging landowners to set aside their wetlands.
- Also, Santee Cooper "power for wildlife" plantings in R.O.W.s
- Recreational features incorporated in Federal preserve lands.

- User surveys. Have shown shift in interest toward non-game species
- Hunter ed. requirement of license for boating
- Setting of quotas on fishing & hunting based on scientific population assessment
- Public schools “outdoor classrooms” (funded by federal government through fishing rodeos for the community).
- DNR’s “Camp Wildwood” & “Project wild”
- Rehab programs for wildlife, as at Kalmia Gardens
- Heritage Trust program; tax check-off
- DNR’s “Becoming an Outdoors Woman”
- Master Naturalist Program (Clemson Extension)
- Project Learning Tree (teaches teachers-highly efficient approach – how to raise awareness of environmental issues) – for comm.
- Scenic Rivers Program – focus on certain portions of rivers – DNR
- S.C. Conservation Bank (*recently funded but not at the time of this meeting*)
- The Nature Conservancy
- Sierra Club – promotes awareness
- The DNR website
- DNR’s Wildlife magazine
- Incentives to replant timber cuts

Dots

- Protection of habitat
- Protection of endangered species
- Additional incentives for agricultural conservation practices
- Starting the planning process
- Public meetings
- Educational programs (BOW)
- Major emphasis of land protection by DNR (conservation easements/purchase)
- Hunter’s Education Program
- Scenic Rivers Program
- Partnership Development
- Environmental laws
- Tax policy – use value taxation of farmland
- Increase in law enforcement
- Education of children (kids in Conservation)
- Broader focus in wildlife management

Question #3: What suggestions do you have for DNR and its partners to address wildlife conservation issues?

Dots

- Give DNR more regulatory control
- Lobbying for issues to be brought to the forefront and the funding to support the lobbying effort
- Increase marketing of the scope of DNR
- Increase personal assistance to landowners: controlled burning, teams for burning
- Wildlife food plot assistance
- Increase cooperative efforts with private conservation groups (ex. Trust for public lands)
- Promotion of wildlife conservation practices in utility right-of-ways
- Provide cooperation between DNR and public landowners for recreational purposes
- Promote better incentives for conservation easements
- Increase public involvement
- Increase state biological surveys/monitoring
- Increase public involvement through awareness
- Get involved with local land use planning processes
- Public access to recreational lands (hunting)
- Work with other agencies to provide more recreational access. (ex. PRT)
- Define scope of DNR better

Stars – The stars’ answers to question 3 are found in the Tabulation

Tabulations

Dots

Of Great Importance:

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Increase public involvement through awareness | 10 |
|--|----|

Of Less Importance:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Lobby for issues to be brought to the forefront and secure funding to support the lobbying efforts | 6 |
| 2. Give DNR more regulatory control | 5 |
| 3. Increase marketing of the scope of DNR | 4 |
| 4. Public access to recreational lands (more monitoring) | 4 |

Of Slight Importance:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Increase statewide biological surveys and monitoring of species | 2 |
|--|---|

2. Increase personal assistance to landowners	2
3. Increase cooperative efforts with public conservation groups	1
4. Provide cooperation between DNR and public landowners	
5. For use of land for recreational purposes	1
6. Get involved in land use planning process	1
7. Better define the scope of DNR	1

Stars

Of Great Importance:

1. Enforcement of existing laws	9
2. More Education (especially beyond elementary school – for adults)	9
3. Increase interagency cooperation	8
4. Get broader participation from the community (must be marketed Aggressively for both creation and implementation of plan)	8
5. Must earmark funds for DNR	8

Of Less Importance:

1. Contact volunteer organizations in high schools and colleges To work on conservation projects	4
---	---

Of Slight Importance:

1. Need to do more controlled burning	3
2. Stronger laws, stronger penalties	3
3. DNR needs to have some role in regulating development	2

Note: *Due to the difference in size of the two groups, different vote totals were used to categorize suggestions.*

**Public Meeting
C.E. Williams Middle School
Charleston, South Carolina
May 13, 2004**

Thirty-eight people participated in the Charleston, South Carolina public meeting. The participants were broken into two groups. The information below is their responses to the three questions.

Question #1: What is the cause of wildlife decline in the region?

Green Stars

- Development
- Over browse by a few dominant species that are over abundant ex: white tail deer
- Single species management
- Public reluctance to follow through on management recommendations (lack of public understanding)
- Non-native species introductions (plants & animals)
- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Lack of fire for management
- Natural disturbances (Flood, channel evolutions, etc)
- Climate changes
- Lack of enforcement of existing laws & recommendations
- Lack of understanding of where/how man fits into the environment
- Inappropriate resources extraction and over harvesting
- Inappropriate recreational USC
- Human disturbance light pollution, walking through rookeries, etc
- Lack of education (youth and adult)
- Feral pets (dogs, cats, etc)
- Degradation due to pollutants

Gold Stars

- Land development
- Impact of Development on habitat
- Lack of education (especially w/public officials)
- Poor and under funded public land management
- Residential sprawl
- Our population/migration in S.C.
- Lack of enforcement of laws & permitting
- Lack of balance of species

- Infrastructure investments that facilitates sprawl
- Government endorsements of sprawl
- Game farming mentality vs. science based wildlife management
- Land management plans
- Not enough focus on non-game species
- Pollution-non point source
- Loss & fragmentation of habitat
- Lack of understanding of natural processes
- Overuse of chemicals (fertilizer, pesticides, household chemicals)
- Not enough cooperation between government agencies
- No funding from users other than game
- Invasive species introduction and ignorant landscaping
- Inconsistent/irregular or no oversight by government agencies
- Lack of statewide coordination
- DNR not advocating wildlife
- Poor regional planning
- Lack of incentive for private land owners
- Lack of conservation education

Question #2: What are we doing right to address these issues?

Green Stars

- Research
- Education
- Habitat conservation
- Public forums
- Check off for wildlife on tax form
- ACE Basin (public - private partnerships)
- State employees (overworked, dedicated)
- State and Federal L.E. efforts
- Conservation Bank Act
- Active private organizations
- Volunteers and grassroots support
- Private sector advocacy
- Planning efforts for growth (ex. SAMP) and resource management

Gold Stars

- Sea bird colony protection
- Breeding bird atlas
- Game management
- Holding this meeting

- Wildlife management areas
- Wildlife magazine
- Native plant society
- Licensing program brings in money
- Camp Wildwood
- Qualified nothing
- “Reel” kids program
- Edisto River Basin Task Force (Saluda and Ashley rivers)
- Reducing state legislation micro-management
- Sea turtle stranding efforts
- Land protection and preservation/ACE Basin
- Cooperation with animal rehab
- Increasing participation with public and private groups
- Local government assistance
- Oyster restoration
- Shorebird surveys
- Public outreach programs

Question #3: What suggestions do you have for DNR and its partners to address wildlife conservation issues?

Green Stars

- Be more aggressive in comments on wetlands and other habitat/permitting issues
- Focus on habitat corridor development – connectivity between habitat protection projects
- Build value of a variety of wildlife species through exposure to the public
- Instill value through education of all age groups
- Include high school age groups in educational efforts
- Do better PR work to reach the public
- Give habitat more focus
- Support local conservation efforts
- Give DNR a larger voice in permit issues
- Fund DNR to allow for public education, enforcement, field personnel
- Encourage public support for habitat conservation programs
- Involvement with county comprehensive plans
- Look at ecological approaches to design and development
- Encourage support and recognize proper development and associated developers
- Work with colleges and educational system to develop MS and PhD programs dealing with local resource issues (ex. Barrier Island Rehab)
- Environmental advocacy groups donate to/support specific DNR projects. Also, seek support from business and industry

- Encourage/improve communication between DNR and advocacy groups (coordination of conservation efforts)
- Provide a natural resource data base of specific conditions, habitat information, etc. (make it accessible to the public)
- Better and more stringent enforcement of existing laws and regulations

Gold Stars

- Utilize (more often than in the past) experts outside DNR
- More public education on habitat preservation
- Being more forceful in getting funding needed (public contact)
- When reviewing developments consult local natural resource planners
- Spend more money on science-based habitat management
- Focus more on enforcement of policies
- Reduce 48 quart limit on recreational shrimping
- Popularize the idea of habitat protection with the public
- Control predators that thrive in suburbs
- Incorporate the Audubon Society's "Important Bird Areas" program into the wildlife plan
- Focus on management of non-game species and their habitat and verify through formal training of top administrators, number of staff and funding
- Fundraising and marketing
- Create a mascot
- More support and enthusiasm for the mission and goal of the department (DNR)
- Stiffer fines and penalties for violations
- Charge walker, hikers, and bikers for using DNR property
- Increase support for eco-tourism
- Require commercial shrimp trawlers to radically reduce by-catch and to destroy less live bottom
- Serve as a clearing house for public information, both in-coming questions and reports of problems
- Undertake control measures for feral hogs and goats on state-owned islands
- Need a moratorium on commercial shrimping (periodic)
- Create a wildlife-education center (S.C. specific)
- Need to fund a comprehensive plan to prevent shorebird disturbance on public beaches
- Increase support for conservation easements
- More coordination between fish and wildlife sections (wetlands regulatory issues)
- Buy more land
- Look at individual plant species as well as wildlife
- Make a long term plan for buffering and protection of wading bird colonies and ground nesting birds
- Control deer
- DNR Director needs advisory role in the state legislation

- Participate in planning process
- Operate wildlife management areas consistently, not like independent fiefdoms

Tabulations

Green Stars

Of Great Importance:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Focus on habitat corridor development | 7 |
| 2. DNR and advocacy groups (coordination of conservation efforts) | 5 |
| 3. Give habitat more focus | 4 |
| 4. Encourage public support for habitat | 4 |
| 5. Encourage support and recognize proper development and associated developers | 3 |

Of Less Importance:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Give DNR a larger voice in permit issue | 2 |
| 2. Build value of a variety of wildlife species through exposure to the public | 2 |

Of Slight Importance:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Be more aggressive in comments on wetlands and other habitat permitting issues | 1 |
| 2. Do better PR work to reach the public | 1 |
| 3. Fund DNR to allow for public education, enforcement, and field personnel | 1 |
| 4. Involvement in county's comprehensive plan | 1 |
| 5. Look at ecological approaches to design and development | 1 |
| 6. Work with colleges and educational systems to develop MS and PhD programs dealing with local resource issues (ex. Barrier Island Rehab) | 1 |
| 7. Environmental advocacy groups donate to/support specific DNR projects. Also, seek support from business and industry. | 1 |
| 8. Better and more stringent enforcement of existing laws and regulations | 1 |

Gold Stars

Of Great Importance:

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Increase support for conservation easements | 10 |
| 2. Fundraising and marketing | 8 |
| 3. Popularize the idea of habitat protection with the public | 8 |
| 4. Buy more land | 6 |

Of Less Importance:

1. DNR Director needs advisory role in the state legislature	5
2. Utilize (more often than in the past) experts outside of DNR	4
3. More public education on habitat preservation	4
4. Spend more money on science-based habitat management	4
5. When reviewing developments consult local natural resource planners	3
6. Stiffer fines and penalties for violations	3
7. Require commercial shrimp trawlers to radically reduce by-catch and to destroy less line bottom	3
8. Need to fund a comprehensive plan to prevent shorebird disturbance on public beaches	3
9. Focus on management of non-game species and their habitat and verify through formal training of top administration, number of staff and funding	4
10. Make a long term plan for buffering and protection of wading bird colonies and ground nesting birds	4
11. When reviewing developments, consult local natural resource planner	3
12. Stiffer fines and penalties for violations	3
13. Require commercial shrimp trawlers to radically reduce by-catch and to destroy less live bottom	3
14. Need to fund a comprehensive plan to prevent shorebird disturbance on public beaches	3

Of Slight Importance:

1. Focus more on enforcement of policies	2
2. Create a mascot	2
3. Undertake control measures for feral hogs and goats on state-owned islands	2
4. Need a moratorium on commercial shrimping (periodic)	2
5. More coordination between fish and wildlife sections (wetlands regulatory issues)	2

Note: *Due to difference in the size of the two groups, different vote totals were used to categorize suggestions*

**Public Meeting
Midlands Technical College
Columbia, South Carolina
May 25, 2004**

Thirty-four people participated in the Columbia, South Carolina public meeting. The participants were broken into two groups. The information below is their responses to the tree questions.

Question #1: What is the cause of wildlife decline in this region?

Yellow Dots

- Loss of habitat and fragmentation of habitat
- Lack of planning in relation to sprawl (lack of conservation)
- Reintroduction of species (i.e. deer)
- Introduction of non-native species
- General urban sprawl - people consuming more to maintain their lifestyle
- Changes in agricultural practices
- Need of support for wildlife centers
- Need for increased awareness about wildlife - lack of respect for wildlife - need for education
- Air and water pollution (i.e. mercury, hazmat)
- Need for public funding
- Bias by state government in favor of developer - prevents needed regulation/legislation - enforcement of existing regulations
- Population growth

Green Dots

- Habitat destruction
- Pollution (water)
- Domestic cats (eating birds)
- Harvesting turtles (legal commercial harvest)
- Domestic dogs destroying wildlife
- Lack of understanding of value of wildlife habitat
- Over-development
- Urban sprawl
- Habitat fragmentation
- Lack of planning (local planning commission) for open/green space
- Chemicals (herbicides, pesticides) in yards and golf courses, municipalities, non-point source
- DOT planning for wildlife crossings non-existent
- Invasive species (plant and animal) resulting in displacement of native species

- Lack of education for elected officials
- Impoundments (stream/river) limits migratory abilities
- Over-harvesting (hunting/fishing)
- Misplaced priorities by our leadership - politicians more interested in getting elected than what is good for South Carolina
- Monoculture decreases diversity
- Short cycle harvesting
- Over human population (local)
- Improvement of technology allowing access to pristine habitats

Question 2: What are we doing right to address these issues?

Yellow Dots

- Conservation easements
- Critical habitat protection - heritage preserves, parks, backyard habitats
- Federally supported farm programs, i.e. WHIP
- Recognizing there is a need for education of General Assembly and public including schools
- Identifying and protecting significant properties
- Best management practices
- Advocacy to protect the environment
- Conservation Bank
- Operation Game Thief
- Inventory of species
- Wildlife management

Green Dots

- Public meetings
- River corridor planning
- Free technical assistance for landowners
- Responsive to public questions
- Sea turtle program
- Collecting biological data
- Identification of the most valuable wildlife habitat (including Heritage Trust)
- Buying land for protection
- Law enforcement - enforcing hunting regulations - protecting property
- Enacted emergency legislation to protect freshwater turtles
- Education programs/outreach for public
- Mapping/GIS
- S.C. Wildlife magazine
- Licensing (fishing, hunting, boating) brings in revenue that is taken away by General Assembly

- Fish stocking - hatcheries
- Provide recreational opportunities
- Bring out-of-state tourism into South Carolina
- Habitat remediation
- Review permits to ensure resource protection
- Partnerships

Question #3: What suggestions do you have for DNR and its partners to address wildlife conservation issues?

Yellow Dots

- Include public input
- DNR should advocate for full funding of conservation bank
- More public education for a better informed public to influence policy
- More cooperation between public and among agencies for better use of finite resources
- Hire more biologists
- More recreational opportunities
- Statewide comprehensive land use plan with DNR as major participant
- More volunteering opportunities for adults and youth
- Better enforcement of existing laws and regulations
- Better collaboration with private entities

Green Dots

- More research on invasive species
- “Toot your own horn” with public
- More research on other topics/fragmentation/effectiveness of mitigation/restoration
- More education programs with a focus on youth
- Balanced DNR Boards/both hunting and fishing and environmentalists
- Keep S.C. Wildlife magazine
- Encourage DOT to use existing roads, don’t build new ones
- Reforestation
- BMP’s
- Protect more land
- Have more people to assure sufficient staff
- Encourage volunteering
- Promote partnering programs including Clemson 4-H program
- Convince legislature to pass regulations to protect native freshwater turtles and other creatures
- Promote low impact development
- Advertising - let people know what the problems are – “Reach out and touch the

public”

- Better integration of planning and goal setting between DNR and it’s “partners”
- “No habitat left behind”
- Larger fines/penalties for violations

Tabulations

Green Dots

Of Great Importance:

1. Promoting low impact development	8
2. Protect more land	6
3. Hire more people	5
4. More educational programs/youth	5

Of Lesser Importance:

1. Larger fines/penalties for violators	4
2. Convince legislature to pass regulations to	4
3. protect native freshwater turtle and other creatures	
4. Balance DNR Board	4
5. Keep Wildlife magazine	4
6. Advertise “Reach Out and Touch the Public”	
7. Better integration of planning and goal setting between DNR and partners	3

Of Slight Importance:

1. More research on invasive species, fragmentation of habitat, and effectiveness of mitigation and restoration	2
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Yellow Dots

Of Great Importance:

1. General urban sprawl	12
2. Bias by state government in favor of developers prevents needed regulation/legislation	10
3. Air/water pollution/mercury/hazmat	8
4. Loss of habitat/fragmentation	8
5. Need for increased awareness about wildlife	

Of Lesser Importance:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Population growth | 2 |
| 2. Introducing non-native species | 1 |

Of Slight Importance:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Changes in agricultural practices | 0 |
| 2. Need for support of wildlife centers | 0 |

Note: *Due to the difference in size of the two groups, different vote totals were used to categorize suggestions.*

**Public Meeting
Furman University
Greenville, South Carolina
May 27, 2004**

Thirty-seven people participated in the Greenville, South Carolina public meeting. The participants were broken into two groups. The information below is their responses to the three questions.

Question 1: What is the cause of wildlife decline in this region?

Blue/Silver Stars

- Loss of habitat: human activity – development, urban sprawl, population growth, comp. for existing residential habitat destruction.
- Insufficient/lack zoning (uneducated elected officials), Intolerance/low priority
- Lack education, conservation ethic (lack), poor promotion/existing natural areas.
- Poor land use.
- Habitat destruction
- Competition for existing resources
- Air pollution and water
- Invasive exotics, comp for existing resources
- Lack of knowledge of species needs
- Insufficient funding, minimum funding base
- Mismanagement of resources, emphasis on game species, poor land use
- Insufficient regulation/enforcement, insufficient/improper regulation
- Competition between state agencies (lack of cooperation)

Green/Gold Stars

- Increased human population
- Habitat fragmentation
- Lack of understanding, concern of Upstate residents
- Ignorance of natural processes
- Out of touch with natural processes (ex. bushhogging power lines during breeding season)
- Land consumption outpacing population growth
- No environmental education centers
- Complexity of issues is bewildering to public
- Poor management practices
- Degradation of rivers & waterways
- People no longer see the value in wildlife
- Lack of leadership on wildlife issues

- Wildlife constituencies are fragmented – don't speak with one voice
- Environmental education center (need more)
- Lack of regulations to protect undeveloped land
- Competition from exotic species
- No respect for "bugs"
- Habitat loss and destruction
- HWA, Sudden oak death, etc.
- Reduction in use of fire

Summary

- Lack of education & concern regarding the value of wildlife and natural processes
- Habitat loss and fragmentation of land and water, wetlands
- Poor public policy/management
- Lack of funding
- Economic pressure to develop wild lands
- Increasing population
- Exotic species, diseases

Question 2: What are we doing right to address these issues?

- Heritage Preserves/ Prop. AQ, conservation easements
- Education – Existing: partnerships and incentives with private landowners, publication of SC Wildlife
- Public Input
- Existing regulation enforcement: mech. Deer anti-poaching
- Creative funding
- Accessibility
- Species management
- Agency/University research
- Funding non-game species work
- Regulation Development

Green/Gold Stars

- Logger education underway, implementation of BMP's
- Operation Game Thief/ law enforcement
- Public dialogue/ open meetings
- Acquired significant amount of public land in last decade, developing management plans
- SC Wildlife Magazine
- Partnerships
- Conservation easements
- ACE Basin – Jocassee Gorges

- Forest stewardship, urban forestry
- Heritage Trust Program
- SCW Backyard habitat
- Recycling
- Project WILD, BOW

Question 3: What suggestions do you have for DNR and its partners to address wildlife conservation issues?

Blue/Silver Stars

- Develop all taxa inventory – use base knowledge: National Parks
- Education Programs: computer based education; grade school education programs; cradle to grave; improve mascot development; materials (educational); use TV PSAs to promote SC's resources and increase media use.
- Public involvement program/volunteerism – wildlife/habitat demonstration areas.
- Review existing regulations
- Expand/create partnerships – landscaping, community based, agency collaboration
- Improve funding for enforcement and regulation – more funding for land acquisition, more money for non-game species.
- Habitat (non-species) based planning
- Research human – wildlife interface

Green/Gold Stars

- DNR should comment on more projects which affect wetlands, be more aggressive.
- DNR should broaden constituency, PSA, look at other states.
- DNR should initiate land acquisition program separate from Heritage Trust and Conservation Land Bank.
- More census, sampling, inventory of wildlife populations.
- Bigger budget.
- Develop policy & plan.
- More standards based curriculum outreach to SC schools; more DNR environmental educators; hand-on conservation experience.
- River and corridor based conservation.
- Birds as a vehicle for conservation.
- DNR conservation/land contribution fund; create a trust fund with independent board of directors.
- Look at multi-use strategies to raise revenues (user fees).

Tabulations

Blue/Silver Stars

Of Great Importance:

1. Education programs	21
2. Habitat (non-species) based planning	11
3. Public Involvement/Volunteerism	10

Of Less Importance:

1. Expand/Create partnerships	9
2. Funding	7

Of Slight Importance:

1. Research human – wildlife interface	3
2. Complete species inventory	3
3. Review existing regulations	2

Green/Gold Stars**Of Great Importance:**

1. Education programs	17
2. Broaden constituency	14
3. Create a conservation/land trust fund	11

Of Slight Importance:

1. Raise revenue through multi-strategies	4
2. Develop policy and plan	3
3. Greater wildlife population inventory	2
4. Use birds as a vehicle for conservation	2
5. Increase DNR budget	1
6. DNR should be more aggressive	1

Note: *Due to the difference in size of the two groups, different vote totals were used to categorize suggestions.*

Appendix D

The Role of the Facilitator

A **Facilitator** is someone who is skilled in helping a group of people move towards reaching a consensus on a topic without themselves taking any side of the issue.

You have agreed to facilitate one of the SC Department of Natural Resources' Spring Public Meetings. Your job at the public meeting is to take one breakout group through a series of three questions and develop consensus on the group's top ten recommendations. At the meeting, you will be paired with a DNR staff member who will function as the group recorder. Your responsibilities include:

- Arrive at the site at 4:30 p.m. to receive instructions, prepare the breakout rooms, eat, and be paired with a member of the DNR team. In addition, some facilitators and recorders will work the registration table.
- After the introductions, Tom Kohlsaas will describe the overall process and Ben Boozer will discuss the evening's input process and introduce the facilitator teams (by color).
- The Facilitator and the Recorder will lead their group to the breakout room.
- The Facilitator will review the ground rules with the group.
- The facilitator team will have approximately 1-¾ hours to elicit input on the following three questions:
 1. What is the cause of wildlife decline in this region? (After responses to this question, summarize responses by combining or re-phrasing to identify issues that will be voted upon later)
 2. What are we doing right to address these issues?
 3. What specific suggestions do you have for DNR and its partners as they address wildlife conservation issues in S.C.?
 4. Distill the discussion into no more than 10 major strategies (summarize and prioritize).
- The Facilitator will re-state what the Recorder writes (as necessary) for correct content.
- At the end of the allotted time, the Facilitator and Recorder will ask for a volunteer to present the strategies. Please tell the spokesperson to be brief and not interject their personal biases. They have 3 minutes to make the report.
- Lead the group back to the auditorium.

As a Facilitator, please remember the following rules:

- The Facilitator's role is to help with HOW the discussion is proceeding.
- Be aware of the time and keep the group focused on the objectives of the meeting.

- Remind the group of the amount of time remaining.
- Remind the group when they are not following the ground rules.
- Be capable of maintaining objectivity.
- Listen without interrupting.
- Tentatively paraphrase individual contributions to check understanding and ensure the whole group hears him.
- Offer a possible wording for an unspoken question that may currently beset the group.
- Offer opportunities for less forceful members to come forward with contributions.

Some things that a Facilitator does not do:

- Back a particular opinion voiced in the group, this includes non-verbal cues.
- Offer their own opinions.
- Let the group unconsciously shy away from a difficult area.
- Lead the group toward what he or she think is the right direction.

The Role of the Recorder

A **Recorder** is someone who is skilled in capturing, in a written format, what is said at a meeting.

You have agreed to record one of the SC Department of Natural Resources' Spring Public Meetings. Your job at the public meeting is to record the public comments of one breakout group as they move through a series of three questions and develop consensus on the group's top ten recommendations. At the meeting, you will be paired with a Clemson University staff member who will function as the group facilitator. Your responsibilities include:

- Arrive at the site a 4:30 p.m. to receive instructions, prepare the breakout rooms, eat, and be paired with a member of the Clemson team.
- After the introductions, Tom Kohlsaas will describe the overall process and Ben Boozer will discuss the evening's input process and introduce the facilitator teams (by color).
- The Facilitator and the Recorder will lead their group to the breakout room.
- The facilitator team will have approximately 1-¾ hours to elicit input on the three questions.
- The Recorder is responsible for accurately capturing the participants' comments on the flip chart and to post the record on a visible portion of the wall.
- The Recorder will try to pull the main verbiage from the comments.
- The Facilitator will state what the Recorder writes for correct content.
- The Recorder can always stop the process to have a participant restate their comment.
- At the end of the session, the Recorder will gather the flip-chart sheets and recommendations and deliver them to the team assembled in the auditorium.
- Both the Facilitator and Recorder are responsible for returning breakout room equipment back to the registration table.